

AN

# A D D R E S S

At the funeral  
of  
HON. HENRY WYLES CUSHMAN;

DELIVERED IN BERNARDSTON, MASS.,

Nov. 24, 1863.

BY  
JOHN B. GREEN,  
PASTOR OF BERNARDSTON FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

---

Printed for Private Circulation.

---

BOSTON:  
PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,  
5, WATER STREET.  
1864.

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2018 with funding from

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries

## A D D R E S S.

---

Psalm xxxvii. 37: "MARK THE PERFECT MAN, AND BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT;  
FOR THE END OF THAT MAN IS PEACE."

My friends, an occasion of more than ordinary solemnity calls us together at this time. We are met to pay a last tribute of respect not only to a friend of this church and society, but a friend of every church in the place,—a public benefactor. On occasions like this, you know I have been very sparing in eulogy; nor have I given way to sentimentalism. I have felt it more to be my duty to picture the perfect life, and strive to awaken a love for that in the minds and hearts of those who were left behind; letting the departed one stand or fall by the suggested comparison. To-day, I may be pardoned if I give utterance to my feelings, and what seems to be suggested by the loss of our friend. I feel not like trying him by the perfect standard given us in the Master, Christ; but like trying ourselves by the standard of our friend.

The words with which I opened my discourse (for my text is our friend), “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace,” — these words took possession of my mind, as, on the 18th of this month, I sat by the bedside of him who has left us, and marked what I felt to be the summons being written on the good man’s face by the angel of death. This scripture I read in a little book, called “Daily Food for Christians,” which I found in the sick-room; and as I read, and looked through the mist, which now filled my eyes, on the fast-changing face of my friend, all the good I had known of him flashed through my mind at once, and to me he appeared a perfect man. When I say perfect, I am aware, that, in one sense, I am extravagant. I speak not of ideal perfection, or the perfection which Christ manifested in his life, and reveals to us by his spirit: I speak of the qualities of men as we find them; and, in this sense, there is no abatement to be made.

In his public life, outside of this community, our friend has ever had the respect and esteem of all who knew him; having filled many high and responsible positions with satisfaction to others, and credit to himself. That he had opponents, if not

enemies, in public life, proves that he had ideas and convictions of his own, and a determination to have his influence felt; but even those who would not agree with him are ready and willing to accord him the character of a clear, candid, and straightforward man. By the natural constitution of his mind, he was cautious, but not unprogressive; acting rather as a regulator on the influence of those who had more zeal and less judgment than himself. The record of his public career is one which reflects credit on his indomitable courage and perseverance, honor on his unwavering integrity, glory on his human sympathies. There may be men who have a brighter public record, but few a fairer one.

In the loss of our friend, the public have lost a reliable man, the country a valuable citizen; but it is we, in this the place of his nativity, who knew him best, and felt his influence most directly, who have lost most deeply. Every institution in this place, which has for its object the instruction and elevation of the people, will miss his fostering care. With the ability and desire to aid in elevating the people, he was foremost in every good work.

The Institute on the hill, which in reality owes its existence to his good judgment, has lost its best

friend. It was his constant care to see it prosperous and useful. He watched over its young life with all the anxiety of which his steady devotion was capable ; but now his suggestive mind and sustaining hand have been withdrawn. On other minds has the care devolved, and by other hands must the work be done. I trust that the young men of Bernardston will catch something of the spirit of our departed friend in his interest for " Powers Institute."

Side by side, in every respect, with the Institute, is the Library, which owes its existence to our friend's love for the best interests of society, and to his generous liberality. Well do I remember the thrill of joy which ran through me, when, a little over a year ago, the announcement was made, that the town was to have a library. I knew its great need of one, and I knew something of its value to the people. That gift to the intellectual nature of the people will be a more lasting monument to his name, and cause him longer to be remembered, than will even the lettered marble ; but the Library, and those who improve its liberal advantages, will miss his fostering care.

The beautiful church-yard — the city of our sainted dead — owes much of its attractiveness to

him whose spirit has left us, but whose body we are about to commit to the grave, where, in sight of this temple in which he had such a lively interest, the dust shall return to the dust, mingling with that of his fathers, whose names he has rescued from oblivion with such consummate skill. In the years which may remain to us, as we visit the last resting-place of the dear playmates of our youth, while we fail not to shed a tear at the grave of our friend, we will not forget that his fertile brain and generous heart has done much to make that place "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." Although the graveyard has gained his body, it has lost his more valuable spirit.

What a loss this whole town has sustained in all its interests, — material, intellectual, moral, and religious! a loss which would be irreparable if the good which men do died with them. But the mark which our friend made on the life and interests of this community is not such, that it will not be felt long after he has gone. But, as a town, we have lost much; how much, we, who knew him best, can but approximately tell: for had he been spared to us twenty years longer, as we had reason to expect he might, the good he would have done would have been very great. But man proposeth, and God disposeth.

It may not be that on any *one* of you, his townsmen, will fall his mantle. In the management of public affairs, his experience was ample and very varied. His mental organization peculiarly adapted him to grasp a multitude of details, not one of which was slighted or forgotten: thus was he fitted to be the wise counsellor, the judicious adviser, and the efficient executor, which we know so ill how to spare. I trust that the genius of his active and effective life will be caught, if not entirely by one, yet in portions by a number.

As a neighbor and friend, few will miss him more than myself. I shall miss the cordial welcome with which he used to greet me on the threshold; I shall miss the kindly hospitality which was at all times extended; I shall miss the pleasant and instructive conversation with which, out of his large store of knowledge, he used to delight me; I shall miss his fatherly counsel, which no one better than myself knows how much I need, and which was so tenderly and feelingly given; I shall miss his manly form and intelligent face in this house of God, so dear to his heart; I shall miss him all the more from the fact, that no trifles could keep him away. Always in his place on the sabbath, an intelligent and attentive listener,—something sure to be appreciated by

every preacher of the gospel. I shall miss him from his pew. But, above all, shall I miss his upright example ; his living illustration of the Sermon on the Mount, whose mighty principles guided his walk among men.

When I speak of my own loss, and the vacancy made in my own heart, I but speak the convictions and feelings of the many.

In the departure of our friend, this religious society and Christian church has sustained a great loss ; ever generous in the support of its necessary expenses ; wise in his counsel when conflicting elements clashed, and foremost to pour oil on the troubled waters when lashed into a storm by less charitable spirits than himself. The Sunday school of this society was organized by him some thirty years ago ; and for many years he was its leading spirit, having been its superintendent for nearly fifteen years, and to the end of his days retained more than a common interest in its welfare.

He has been a member of this church for twenty-eight years. Being conscious of having received a positive spiritual help from the teachings and example of Christ, he was manly enough to own it. How he longed for a better type of church-life

among the brethren, only those who knew his feelings on his death-bed can tell. With eternity full in view, with his feet almost touching the waters of the dark river, he made the most earnest inquiries respecting the attitude of certain of his friends in regard to a profession of faith ; remarking of one, with a tone of sad regret, that he was too good a man to stand where he did, — outside of the church. I know his desire for a deeper and more earnest church-life ; but from natural constitution of mind, being undemonstrative, he could do little, he said, to bring about the end he thought was so desirable. But he did more for the cause of Christ by quiet obedience to his precepts than can be done by multiplying words about them. There are diversities of gifts, and it is not given to one to excel in all.

To our brother's quiet benevolence, his Christian charity, I bear willing testimony. To his deep religious conviction and feeling I have been a privileged witness. It has been my lot to be much with him during his painful illness ; and the beautiful words of deep spiritual meaning, and the touching, heartfelt prayers, which fell from his lips, gave certain evidence that he had been led through his suffering far into the Holy of Holies, and

received of the Lord some deep revealing. His affliction worked out for him an eternal weight of glory.

On the last Sunday evening on which his faculties remained to him in undisturbed vigor, it was my privilege to read to him his favorite hymn, —

“While thee I seek, protecting Power,” —

and to offer prayer, and to listen to the eloquent and touching words with which he seemed more than ever to overflow.

It was truly a holy season, a time of refreshing from the Lord.

It was a beautiful, calm, and peaceful evening: the sun had just sunk behind the western hills, and the curtain of night was being slowly drawn around the earth; and we were together in the name of the dear Lord and Saviour, and his spirit was with us. Our friend spoke freely of death and futurity; saying he did not expect to live long, and said he was prepared to meet the change when the summons came; had the natural desire to live, yet was not at all afraid to die. And thus, in the calmest manner, he discoursed, on that memorable evening, on what, to many, is the king of terrors. But he had been with Jesus, had drunk deep of his spirit, and

manifested his life ; and the terror was gone. In his life he had been perfect, and in his ways upright ; and the end of all such is peace. On that beautiful evening, I could not help a feeling steal over my mind, that I was speaking to my friend for the last time on earth. The coming event surely cast its shadow before. But my strong desire to have him live gave rise to many delusive hopes,—hopes only to be crushed by the event which we mourn to-day.

“Oh ! why has worth so short a date,  
While villains ripen gray with time ?  
Must thou, the noble, generous, great,  
Fall in bold manhood’s hardy prime ?”

This question is doubtless one which has occurred to you all. Why is it that such a man should be taken away, — one who was of such inestimable value to the community, — while others, who are not only not a blessing, but, to all human appearance, a hinderance, if not a positive curse, to the public good, are allowed to remain ? I suppose this is a question which arose in the minds of the disciples of Jesus when he was taken away: “Was he not good ? did we not love him ? and was he not worthy of our love ? Did he not seek the good of those who put him to death ? and why are they

permitted to remain, while he, the spotless one, whom we so much need, is allowed to depart?" It was expedient for them that he go away. Unless he depart, they will never be able to appreciate the worth of his grand purpose, or be filled with his divine spirit. While he remains, they constantly misapprehend him; think he ought to do this and that; and murmur because he moves serenely on, heedless of their short-sighted and vain imaginings. But, when he is gone, they have to fall back upon themselves, — back on so much of his spirit as they have received; and thus are led from one revelation of the truth to another, till they are filled with the spirit of Him who was the truth; and his great soul's purpose then becomes clear to them.

So we, with our various notions of what our friend ought to do, and what he ought not, have been ever ready with our suggestions and our criticisms; dissatisfied because this and that was not the subject of his attention. It was expedient for us that he go away. Now we can appreciate his great value; carping not because our idea was not his idea, but grateful for what he has done, and thankful that he retained a soul unruffled by our vain repinings, and a purpose for good which included all our petty

schemes. Let us hope that it may be given us to fall back on so much of his spirit as we may have received, working together in the unity of that spirit which is the bond of peace, till the moral and intellectual life of our village shall be lifted where our friend and brother was anxious to place it. Like the disciples of Jesus, who looked to his bodily presence to do every thing for them; so we looked to him, who has just left us, to do every thing for us. Our own personal resources have been left undeveloped. It was expedient for us that he go away. No doubt, God has some more important work for him to do in another part of his vast vineyard; and we ought not to repine, although to part with the wise counsellor, the kindly neighbor, and the loving friend, must send a pang to the heart of the coldest. But what is our loss is surely his gain; for “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”

Thus far, I have spoken of the departed as a citizen, a neighbor, and a friend; and in these relations, in view of his transcendently good qualities, his short-comings disappear, and we see him as an upright and perfect man.

I have avoided, till now, speaking of that more close and tender relation of husband. I have done

so purposely; for I am aware how unable I am to do justice to his tender affection for her who was nearer and dearer than any other. I have been afraid lest I might wound those feelings which human words, at best, can do so little to heal. To you, my sister, is that great bereavement which words fail to express, whose language is the hot tear-drops. Blessed to you is the recollection of your husband; and heavy indeed is your loss, — how heavy, only you on earth can tell: but, as acts speak a truer language than words, I know, from what I was privileged to witness of your devotion, that the star of your earthly hope has set, but set to rise brighter and better in another sphere. Long shall I remember your close and unwearied attention to him, who for your sake, and at the prospect of leaving you alone, shed tear-drops like rain. Be assured that you have the deepest and most heartfelt sympathy of us all. And I need not assure you, that you can have the comforting and sustaining spirit of God, the Father. You are no stranger to the promises of the divine Master, that the Comforter shall be sent. To him go with your widowed and orphaned affections, and receive the sweet unction of that Holy Spirit which cometh through faith.

“ Deem not that they are blest alone  
 Whose days a peaceful tenor keep ;  
 The God who loves our race has shown  
 A blessing for the eyes that weep.

Oh ! there are days of hope and rest  
 For every dark and troubled night !  
 And grief may bide an evening guest,  
 But joy shall come with morning light.”

And you, my friends, whose relations with the departed were more intimate than ours, — your loss is great. I know how much you looked to him for counsel and advice, and which you never looked for in vain ; but now his voice is stilled in death, and his last good counsel has been given. The dust must return to the dust.

And now, my friends, as we turn from the place of his sleeping, and resume the duties which devolve on us, let us cherish in our hearts his best sayings, and emulate in our lives his perfect example, especially in that beautiful charity which pervaded his being, and which never failed to find something to admire in the worst of men, — for

“ E'en his failings leaned to virtue's side,” —

and we, too, when the pale messenger shall have come with the summons, — we, too, shall sleep in peace.

And thou, brother departed, whom we have learned to esteem and to love, we bid thee now farewell! And —

“ Where the faded flower shall freshen, —  
Freshen never more to fade ;  
Where the shaded sky shall brighten, —  
Brighten never more to shade ;  
Where the sun-blaze never scorches ;  
Where the star-beams cease to chill ;  
Where no tempest stirs the echoes  
Of the wood or wave or hill ;  
Where the morn shall wake in gladness,  
And the moon the joy prolong ;  
Where the daylight dies in fragrance  
'Mid the burst of holy song, —  
Brother, we shall meet and rest  
'Mid the holy and the blest.”



A P P E N D I X.

---

At the conclusion of the discourse, the Rev. Mr. MOORS, of Greenfield, Mass., who was long an intimate and esteemed friend of the deceased, made the following remarks:—

AFTER the kind and affectionate tribute to our friend to which we have listened, it seems hardly necessary to add any thing more. But Mr. Cushman held so many and varied relations to us all, was so well known and respected by the whole community, that you will pardon me if I detain you a few moments, and yield to the wish of the family and his minister, and add a word to what has already been said.

I will not venture to intrude into the sanctuary of private grief. I commend you who are stricken and afflicted to that consolation which Christian faith and trust can alone furnish.

Mr. Cushman has acted a prominent part in the public affairs of this region for many years. I

know of no man among us who has held so many offices of honor and trust as he ; and he has been faithful to them all. He was eminently a businessman ; and, while he had a wonderful method and accuracy of detail, he had a mind capable of grasping great principles.

He was one in whom we all put confidence. We trusted alike in his ability and integrity. We knew that whatever he undertook would be done, and well done. He has left a memorable example of untiring industry and conscientious fidelity.

While Mr. Cushman was devoted to business, he found time to aid many public enterprises. The interests of agriculture had no more devoted friend than he. He was a faithful friend to our public schools. No one could be with him long without finding how near to his heart lay the subject of popular education.

He was one of the founders, and for years one of the officers, of our County School Association ; and when the society languished, and its friends were discouraged, Mr. Cushman was sure to be present with a word or resolution urging the members to *persevere*. This was, as you remember, a frequent word with him. It is owing to his counsels that the School Association still lives.

In the Sunday School, in this place, Mr. Cushman did efficient service. He did not think it beneath his notice, but gave to it much time and thought. When I first came to this neighborhood, I was accustomed to hear the Bernardston Sunday School, under the superintendence of Mr. Cushman, spoken of as the model school. In later years, he gave up the active labor in it, but never ceased to feel a tender and warm interest in it.

Mr. Cushman was a religious man. He had given thoughtful study to the subject, and had a reason to give for the faith he held. It was with him no hear-say tradition, but a vital reality lying at the basis of his character. He was a devoted adherent to the established ordinances of the Christian Church, and often expressed his regret at the tendency to neglect or despise them. He was a constant and interested attendant upon public worship, and has done much for this religious society.

His death is a great public loss, which will be felt in all the community; still more here where he was best known.

My friends of this religious society, let me entreat you to recognize and accept the new responsibilities which now devolve upon you. Mr. Cushman has been, without question, for many years the working

head of this society. You leaned on him; you trusted in him. He was willing to do a good deal, and you were willing to follow his guidance. This prop now fails you. Let his example inspire and quicken you to increased diligence and fidelity to sustain the institutions which he loved, and to which he devoted so much thought and care. He felt a deep interest in *this* his native town. Its good name was precious to him. You have been honored in his honors. Be true to all that was pure and noble in him: so shall the influence of his life not be lost among you.

It was an oft-repeated wish of Mr. Cushman, that the following hymn should be sung at his funeral :—

WHILE thee I seek, protecting Power,  
Be my vain wishes stilled ;  
And may this consecrated hour  
With better hopes be filled !

Thy love the power of thought bestowed ;  
To thee my thoughts would soar ;  
Thy mercy o'er my life has flowed, —  
That mercy I adore.

In each event of life, how clear  
Thy ruling hand I see !  
Each blessing to my soul more dear  
Because conferred by thee.

In every joy that crowns my days,  
In every pain I bear,  
My heart shall find delight in praise,  
Or seek relief in prayer.

When gladness wings my favored hour,  
Thy love my thoughts shall fill ;  
Resigned, when storms of sorrow lower,  
My soul shall meet thy will.

My lifted eye, without a tear,  
The gathering storm shall see :  
My steadfast heart shall know no fear ;  
That heart shall rest on thee.

